

## CAYUGA NATION CELEBRATES LANDMARK SUPREME COURT DECISION IN OKLAHOMA INDIAN RESERVATION CASE

The Cayuga Nation welcomes a victory by a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation at the United States Supreme Court today in which the Nation's highest court determined that much of eastern Oklahoma is "Indian Country."

In rendering its decision, the Court ruled that Congress had never destroyed the sovereignty of the Creek Nation over an area covering approximately half of the state, with a population of 1.8 million.

"This decision confirms what the Cayuga Nation has been saying for all these years: our historic reservation continues to exist and can only be disestablished by Congressional action," said Clint Halftown, the Nation's federal representative. "It sends the most powerful of all messages to state and federal authorities who have brazenly and consistently challenged the status of our reservation. It is the greatest victory our people could have hoped for in this case and it is a victory for all Indian nations."

Halftown said the Nation is reviewing the implications of the Court's decision on the Nation's pending litigation as well as for possible future litigation. "We will be utilizing this decision to achieve the best possible results for our citizens," he added.

Portion of the decision here:

*"The federal government promised the Creek a reservation in perpetuity. ... Congress has never withdrawn the promised reservation. As a result, many of the arguments before us today follow a sadly familiar pattern. Yes, promises were made, but the price of keeping them has become too great, so now we should just cast a blind eye. We reject that thinking. If Congress wishes to withdraw its promises, it must say so. Unlawful acts, performed long enough and with sufficient vigor, are never enough to amend the law. To hold otherwise would be to elevate the most brazen and longstanding injustices over the law, both rewarding wrong and failing those in the right."*

Link to full decision here:

[https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/19pdf/18-9526\\_9okb.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/19pdf/18-9526_9okb.pdf)